WHO IS MENAHEM BEGIN?

THE INSTITUTE FOR PALESTINE STUDIES

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A Documentary Sketch

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FOREWORD

With the emergence of the Likud as the largest party in the Israeli elections of 17 May 1977, its leader, Menahem Begin, has achieved a position of influence that he has not known since he commanded the Irgun Zvai Leumi terrorist group in the last years of the British mandate in Palestine. In this documentary collection, the Institute for Palestine Studies presents a reminder of Menahem Begin, the Irgun leader responsible for the Deir Yasin massacre of 1948, and an introduction to the Arab and foreign policy of Menahem Begin, the Herut and Likud leader who has become Israel's new prime minister. Apart from the biographical article (no. 1) and the views on Deir Yasin (no. 2), Begin has been left to speak for himself.

In this second edition the biographical article (no. 1) has been expanded, and Begin's speech presenting his government to the Knesset on 20 June 1977 (no. 8) has been added.

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1. Menahem Begin—a biographical note

Menahem Begin was born in 1913 in Brest-Litovsk and graduated in law from Warsaw University. His involvement in Zionism started when he became a follower of Vladimir Jabotinsky (1880–1940), the leader of Revisionist Zionism. Jabotinsky had founded a paramilitary youth movement, Betar, in 1923 based on his ideas of militant Jewish communal defence organization. In Palestine his initiative was instrumental in the creation of the underground Jewish army, Haganah. Due to his uncompromising militancy Jabotinsky had already in the 1920's found himself at odds with the labour wing of Zionism led by Chaim Weizmann and the Jewish Agency. In 1929 Menahem Begin joined the Polish Betar and became its commander in 1938. During the Palestine revolt in 1936–1939 he organized mass demonstrations at the British embassy in Warsaw and was imprisoned by the Polish police. In 1939 he represented the Polish Betar at the organization's world congress and was instrumental in amending the oath of allegiance to include a vow to conquer the "Jewish Homeland" by force of arms.

It was during the 1930's that Begin first came into contact with the Irgun Zvai Leumi, commonly known as Etzel, from the Hebrew initials, or simply as the Irgun. This group had been formed in 1931 by elements of the Haganah who had left in protest against an allegedly passive defence strategy in Palestine. The Irgun had strong ideological links with Jabotinsky's Revisionism and gave military training to Betar groups both in Palestine and in eastern Europe. Its programme, illustrated by its emblem consisting of a clenched fist brandishing a rifle superimposed on a map of the British mandate including Transjordan, coincided well with Betar's militant methods and the pledge to work for "the rebirth of the Jewish state, with a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan." By the late thirties the Irgun had already started a series of terror operations against Arab civilian targets. These mostly took the form of mines planted in Arab

market places in the main towns of Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa.

When Poland was occupied in 1939 Menahem Begin fled east to Vilna where he was arrested by the Soviet authorities and sent to Siberia. In 1941 he was released as a consequence of an agreement between the Polish government-in-exile and the USSR. He joined a Free Polish unit formed in the Soviet Union and was sent to Palestine. In 1943, having deserted from the Polish army, he became the commander of the Irgun.

Under Menahem Begin's leadership the Irgun rejected the truce with the British which the Jewish Agency and the Haganah had decided on for the duration of the war against Nazi Germany. Operations against the British and against Arab resistance were stepped up as was illegal immigration. The differences between Irgun and the Jewish Agency led by Ben Gurion reached a climax in the wake of the murder of Lord Moyne, the British Resident in Cairo, in 1944 at the hands of the Stern gang, an Irgun splinter group. The Haganah arrested a number of Irgun members and handed them over to the British authorities.

After 1945 the Irgun's activities were intensified, sometimes in unofficial cooperation with the Haganah and sometimes independently. In July 1946 the group blew up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, seat of the British mandatory civilian administration. The casualties, which included some of the most senior civil servants of the country (Jewish, Arab and British), totalled 91 dead and 45 injured. The British offered a reward of £10,000 for the capture of Begin, and a number of Irgun men were executed or deported. In 1947 Irgun hanged two British sergeants who had been held as hostages. The group was also responsible for the bombing of the British embassy in Rome and a number of letter-bomb incidents both in Palestine and in Europe.

The operation which gained Menahem Begin and the Irgun the greatest notoriety was the massacre of 241 Arabs in the village of Deir Yasin on the outskirts of Jerusalem in April 1948. Even Zionist organizations hurried to condemn the action. The Jewish Agency led by Ben Gurion sent a telegram of apology

to King Abdallah of Transjordan, expressing their "horror and disgust at the barbarous manner" in which the operation had been carried out. Chief Rabbis Herzog and Uziel issued a statement calling on "those responsible to realize the depths of the shame which they have inflicted on the Yishuv to whom such acts are utter abomination."

Another major operation for which the Irgun was responsible during the civil war phase of the 1948 war (i.e. before the end of the Mandate on May 15 of that year) was the indiscriminate and continuous mortar shelling of Jaffa which was instrumental in inducing the exodus of its Arab population.

After the establishment of Israel in May 1948 the Irgun continued operations despite Begin's offer to disband and join the army of the Provisional Government. In June it came to a showdown between the Irgun and the government when Ben Gurion refused to allow the Irgun freighter *Altalena*, with Begin on board, to unload its cargo of arms, ammunition and volunteers in contravention of a truce arranged by the UN. Negotiations failed when Begin refused to give a sufficiently large share of the cargo to the Haganah, and Ben Gurion ordered Israeli soldiers to shell and destroy the ship. The affair brought about an internal crisis in the Irgun as a result of which the organization disbanded in September.

Most of the members were absorbed in the Israeli army, while Begin and a number of the other leaders founded the Herut ("Freedom") Movement. The motto of the Herut, echoing as it does the Irgun emblem, is to this day: "Both banks of the Jordan." (Hebrew: *Shtai Gadot La-yarden.*) As leader of the party, Begin became a member of the Knesset in 1949 and has sat on the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee and the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee. In 1952 he led the opposition against the reparations agreement with West Germany.

The Herut Movement averaged about 12 percent of the vote in the first five Knesset elections. Its policy was generally regarded as right wing in opposition to the Labour party and the Histadrut. The party was expansionist, maintaining the aim of including

all mandatory Palestine in Israel. On this common policy the Herut joined with the general Zionist wing of the Liberal party in 1965 to form the Gahal bloc. In the elections of that year Gahal gained 21 percent of the vote.

Just before the June 1967 war Gahal joined in a government of national unity and Begin was named minister without portfolio. This government broke up in 1970 when Begin took Gahal out in opposition to the decision of the majority to accept a US initiative aimed at a ceasefire on the Suez Canal and negotiations towards an Israeli withdrawal from the Canal. Back in opposition Begin worked at bringing other smaller parties into the Gahal bloc. In 1973 he succeeded and formed the Likud which in the elections at the end of the year won 39 seats. In the election of 17 May 1977 the Likud became the largest single party with 43 seats.

Begin is a regular contributor to the Hebrew daily *Maariv* and has written *The Revolt* (Hebrew 1950, English 1951) and *The White Nights* (Hebrew 1953, English 1957).

2. Deir Yasin, 10 April 1948

a) by Menahem Begin

Excerpted from Menahem Begin, The Revolt *(Tel Aviv: Hadar, 1964), pp. 162–165.*

Dir Yassin, lying some two thousand feet above sea-level, was an important link in the chain of Arab positions enclosing Jerusalem from the West. Through Dir Yassin Arab forces from Ein Kerem and Bethlehem crossed to the Kastel front, whence they attacked Jewish convoys along the only road from Jerusalem to the coast. After the capture of Dir Yassin—actually the first Arab village to be captured by Jewish forces—the Haganah commander in Jerusalem announced that its capture was of no military value and was, indeed, contrary to the general plan for the defence of Jerusalem. We had, to our regret, to refute Mr. Shaltiel with the aid of a letter from—Mr. Shaltiel. Raanan, the Irgun commander in Jerusalem, radioed to us the following letter he had received from the Haganah Regional Commander:

> 'I learn that you plan an attack on Dir Yassin. I wish to point out that the capture of Dir Yassin and holding it is one stage in our general plan. I have no objection to your carrying out the operation provided you are able to hold the village. If you are unable to do so I warn you against blowing up the village which will result in its inhabitants abandoning it and its ruins and deserted houses being occupied by foreign forces. This situation will increase our difficulties in the general struggle. A second conquest of the place will involve us in heavy sacrifices. Furthermore, if foreign forces enter the place this will upset the plan. . .'

When we published this letter we ended with those three points after the word 'plan.' The national interest required that we should not reveal what that plan was. Today those three points are superfluous. It can be revealed that in their place in the original letter there came the highly significant words: 'for establishing an airfield.' That airfield was established at Dir Yassin and, for a time, served as the only means of communication between besieged Jerusalem and the coast.

Re-reading that letter we may draw certain conclusions. Its language may not have been in conformity with the requirements of style. Mr. Shaltiel's later verbal declaration was not in conformity with the truth. But the capture of Dir Yassin was not in conflict with the general plan for the defence of Jerusalem. On the contrary: "The capture of Dir Yassin and holding it are one stage in the general plan." Dir Yassin was captured with the knowledge of the Haganah and with the approval of its Commander.

Apart from the military aspect, there is a moral aspect to the story of Dir Yassin. At that village, whose name was publicized throughout the world, both sides suffered heavy casualties. We had four killed and nearly forty wounded. The number of casualties was nearly forty per cent of the total number of the attackers. The Arab troops suffered casualties three times as heavy. The fighting was thus very severe. Yet the hostile propaganda, disseminated throughout the world, deliberately ignored the fact that the civilian population of Dir Yassin was actually given a warning by us before the battle began. One of our tenders carrying a loud speaker was stationed at the entrance to the village and it exhorted in Arabic all women, children and aged to leave their houses and to take shelter on the slope of the hill. By giving this humane warning our fighters threw away the element of complete surprise, and thus increased their own risk in the ensuing battle. A substantial number of the inhabitants obeyed the warning and they were unhurt. A few did not leave their stone houses—perhaps because of the confusion. The fire of the enemy was murderous—to which the number of our casualties bears eloquent testimony. Our men were compelled to fight for every house; to overcome the enemy they used large numbers of hand-grenades. And the civilians who had disregarded our warnings, suffered inevitable casualties.

The education which we gave our soldiers throughout the years of revolt was based on the observance of the traditional laws of war. We never broke them unless the enemy first did so and thus forced us, in accordance with the accepted custom of war, to apply reprisals. I am convinced, too, that our officers and men wished to avoid a single unnecessary casualty in the Dir Yassin battle. But those who

throw stones of denunciation at the conquerors of Dir Yassin[1] would do well not to don the cloak of hypocrisy.

In connection with the capture of Dir Yassin the Jewish Agency found it necessary to send a letter of apology to Abdullah, whom Mr. Ben Gurion, at a moment of great political emotion, called "the wise ruler who seeks the good of his people and this country." The "wise ruler," whose mercenary forces demolished Gush Etzion and flung the bodies of its heroic defenders to the birds of prey, replied with feudal superciliousness. He rejected the apology and replied that the Jews were all to blame and that he did not believe in the existence of "dissidents." Throughout the Arab world and the world at large a wave of lying propaganda was let loose about "Jewish atrocities."

The enemy propaganda was designed to besmirch our name. In the result it helped us. Panic overwhelmed the Arabs of Eretz Israel. Kolonia village, which had previously repulsed every attack of the Haganah, was evacuated overnight and fell without further fighting. Beit-Iksa was also evacuated. These two places overlooked the main road; and their fall, together with the capture of Kastel by the Haganah, made it possible to keep open the road to Jerusalem. In the rest of the country, too, the Arabs began to flee in terror, even before they clashed with Jewish forces. Not what happened in Dir Yassin, but what was invented about Dir Yassin, helped to carve the way to our decisive victories on the battlefield. The legend of Dir Yassin helped us in particular in the saving of Tiberias and the conquest of Haifa.

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[1] Arab headquarters at Ramallah broadcast a crude atrocity story, alleging indiscriminate massacre by Irgun troops of about 240 men, women and children in Dir Yassin. The official Zionist bodies, apprehensive of the Irgun's growing strength and popular support, eagerly seized upon this Arab accusation and, without even trying to check their veracity, accepted them at their face value and bestirred themselves to denounce and smear the Irgun. This combined Arab-Zionist *Greuelpropaganda* produced, however, unexpected and momentous consequences. Arabs throughout the country, induced to believe wild tales of "Irgun butchery," were seized with limitless panic and started to flee for their lives. This mass flight soon developed into a maddened, uncontrollable stampede. Of the about 800,000 Arabs who lived on the present territory of the State of Israel, only some 165,000 are still there. The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be overestimated.

b) by Jacques de Reynier

From W. Khalidi (ed.), From Haven to Conquest *(Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1971), pp. 761–766.*

On Saturday 10 April a very serious incident took place: I received a telephone call from the Arabs asking me to go immediately to the village of Deir Yassin, where the civilian population of the whole village had just been massacred. I learned that this sector, situated very near to Jerusalem, was held by Irgun extremists. The Jewish Agency and the Headquarters of the Haganah told me that they knew nothing of the affair and that in any case it was impossible for anyone to penetrate into Irgun territory. They advised me not to get mixed up in the affair, as, if I did, my mission would almost certainly be terminated.

Not only did they refuse to help me, they also refused to be responsible for what they were sure would happen to me. I replied that I intended to go, and that it was a matter of public knowledge that the Jewish Agency exercised its authority over all the territory in Jewish hands and was therefore responsible for my person as well as for my liberty of action, within the limits of my mission.

However, I did not know what to do. Without Jewish help, it was impossible for me to reach the village. Then, by thinking hard, I remembered that a Jewish nurse in a nearby hospital had given me her telephone number, telling me, with an odd expression, that I could call her if ever I found myself in an inextricable situation. Taking a chance, I rang her up late at night and explained the situation. She told me to go to a certain place with my car at 7 o'clock next morning, and there pick up the person I found waiting. Then she rang off.

The next morning, at the appointed place and time, a man in civilian clothes, but with pockets bulging with revolvers, jumped into my car and told me to drive on without stopping. At my request, he agreed to show me the road to Deir Yassin, but admitted that he could not do much for me. We went out of Jerusalem, leaving the main road behind the rear of the regular army, and took a road that cut across it. Very soon, we were stopped by two soldier-like individuals, whose looks were far from reassuring, with machine-guns in their hands, and

large cutlasses in their belts. From their appearance I gathered they must be the men I was looking for. I got out of the car and submitted myself to a thorough search, then realized that I was a prisoner. Everything seemed lost, when, suddenly, a huge fellow, at least two meters tall, and as large as a cupboard, appeared, pushed his comrades aside, and seized my hand and squeezed it in his enormous paws, shouting incomprehensibly. He did not understand either English or French, but in German we seemed to be able to communicate perfectly. He expressed his joy at seeing a member of the Red Cross because, as he explained, its intervention had saved his life no less than three times when he was a prisoner in a German concentration camp. He said that I was more than a brother to him, and that he would do everything I asked him. With such a bodyguard I felt I could go to the end of the world, and so to start with, we went to Deir Yassin.

After reaching a hill, 500 yards away from the village which we could just see, we had to wait a long time for the order to proceed. Arab firing broke out whenever anybody tried to across the road, and the commander of the Irgun detachment did not seem willing to receive me. At last he arrived, young, distinguished, and perfectly correct, but there was a peculiar glitter in his eyes, cold and cruel. I explained my mission to him, pointing out that it was no part of my task either to pass judgment or arbitrate—I only wanted to save the wounded and take back the dead. The Jews, in any case, had signed the Geneva Convention, so that my mission was an official one. This last statement angered the officer who asked me to understand once and for all that here the Irgun were in command and no one else, not even the Jewish Agency, with whom they had nothing in common. Here my "wardrobe" intervened, seeing the tension growing higher, and he seemed to find the right arguments, for suddenly the officer said that I could do as I wished but on my own responsibility. He told me the story of this village, inhabited exclusively by Arabs, to the number of approximately 400, never armed, and living on good terms with the surrounding Jews. According to him the Irgun had arrived 24 hours earlier and ordered the inhabitants by loudspeaker to evacuate all houses and surrender: the time given to obey the order was a quarter

of an hour. Some of these miserable people had come forward and were taken prisoners, to be released later in the direction of the Arab lines. The rest, not having obeyed the order, had met the fate they deserved. But there was no point in exaggerating things, there were only a few dead, and they would be buried as soon as the "cleaning up" of the village was over. If I found any bodies, I could take them, but there were certainly no wounded. This account made my blood run cold.

I went back then to the Jerusalem road and got an ambulance and a truck that I had alerted through the Red Shield. The two Jewish drivers and the Jewish doctor who boarded them were more dead than alive, but followed me courageously. Before reaching the Irgun outpost I stopped and inspected the two vehicles. A good thing I did, too, as I discovered two Jewish journalists preparing to get the scoop of their lives. Unfortunately for them, I very firmly got rid of them. I reached the village with my convoy, and the Arab firing stopped. The gang was wearing country uniform, with helmets. All of them were young, some even adolescents, men and women, armed to the teeth: revolvers, machine-guns, hand grenades, and also large cutlasses in their hands, most of them still blood-stained. A beautiful young girl, with criminal eyes, showed me hers still dripping with blood; she displayed it like a trophy. This was the "cleaning up" team, that was obviously performing its task very conscientiously.

I tried to go into a house. A dozen soldiers surrounded me, their machine-guns aimed at my body, and their officer forbade me to move. The dead, if any, would be brought to me, he said. I then flew into one of the most towering rages of my life, telling these criminals what I thought of their conduct, threatening them with everything I could think of, and then pushed them aside and went into the house.

The first room was dark, everything was in disorder, but there was no one. In the second, amid disembowelled furniture and covers and all sorts of debris, I found some bodies cold. Here, the "cleaning up" had been done with machine-guns, then hand grenades. It had been finished off with knives, anyone could see that. The same thing in the next room, but as I was about to leave, I heard something like

a sigh. I looked everywhere, turned over all the bodies, and eventually found a little foot, still warm. It was a little girl of ten, mutilated by a hand grenade, but still alive. As I was about to carry her out, the officer tried to stop me, blocking the doorway. I pushed him aside and went through with my precious load protected by my good friend the glass cupboard. The ambulance set off, with orders to come back as soon as possible. As the gang had not dared to attack me directly, I could continue. I gave orders for the bodies in this house to be loaded on the truck, and went into the next house, and so on. Everywhere, it was the same horrible sight. I found only two more people alive, both women, one of them an old grandmother, hidden behind a heap of firewood where she had kept quiet for at least 24 hours.

There had been 400 people in this village; about fifty of them had escaped, and were still alive. All the rest had been deliberately massacred in cold blood for, as I observed for myself, this gang was admirably disciplined and only acted under orders.

Back in Jerusalem I went straight to the Jewish Agency where I found the leaders dismayed, apologetic and pretending, which indeed was true, that they had no power over the Irgun or the Stern Gang. However, they had done nothing to try and prevent about a hundred men from committing this unspeakable crime.

Then I went to visit the Arabs. I said nothing about what I had seen, but only that after a preliminary hurried visit to the place, it seemed to me that there were several dead people, and that I wondered what to do with them and where to put them. The indignation of the Arabs was understandable, but it prevented them from taking a decision. They would have liked the corpses brought back to the Arab side, but feared a revolt of the population and did not know where to put them or bury them. Finally, they decided to ask me to see to it that they were decently buried in a place that could be recognised later. I agreed to undertake this task and went back to Deir Yassin. I found the Irgun people in a very bad temper; they tried to prevent me from approaching the village. I understood their attitude when I saw the number, and especially the state of the corpses that had been lined up all along the main road. I asked very firmly that the burial be started and insisted on being present. After discus-

sion, digging was started on a big grave in a small garden. It was impossible to check the identity of the dead as they had no papers, but I took careful note of all their particulars, with approximate ages. As night fell, I went back to Jerusalem, stating clearly that I was coming back the next day.

Two days later, the Irgun had disappeared from the place, and the Haganah had taken over; we discovered several places where the corpses had been stacked, without decency or respect, in the open air.

After this last visit, I went back to my office where I was visited by two gentlemen, well-dressed in civilian clothes, who had been waiting for me for more than an hour. They were the commander of the Irgun detachment and his aide. They had prepared a paper that they wanted me to sign. It was a statement to the effect that I had been very courteously received by them, and obtained all the facilities I had requested, in the accomplishment of my mission, and thanking them for the help I had received.

As I showed signs of hesitation and even started to argue with them, they said that if I valued my life, I had better sign immediately. The only course open to me was to convince them that I did not value my life in the least and that a declaration quite contrary to theirs had already gone to Geneva. I added that in any case I was not in the habit of signing statements written by others, but only those exclusively drawn up by me. Before I let them go, I tried to explain to them once more the purpose of our mission and asked them whether or not they intended to oppose us in the future. I did not get an answer that day, but later, in Tel Aviv, I saw them again; they needed our help for some of their own people, and in gratitude for our cooperation, they were of great assistance to us on several occasions, returning some hostages we claimed without argument.

The affair of Deir Yassin had immense repercussions. The press and radio spread the news everywhere among Arabs as well as the Jews. In this way a general terror was built up among the Arabs, a terror astutely fostered by the Jews. On both sides, it was made into a political argument, and the results were tragic. Driven by fear, the Arabs left their homes to find shelter among their kindred; first isolated farms, then villages, and in the end whole towns were evacuated,

even when the Jewish invader had done no more than make it appear that he intended to attack. Finally, about 700,000 Arabs became refugees, leaving everything behind in their haste, their one hope being to avoid the fate of the people of Deir Yassin. The effects of this massacre are far from being over today, as this immense crowd of refugees is still living in makeshift camps, without work and without hope, the Red Cross distributing to them emergency aid provided by the United Nations.

The Jewish authorities were terribly shocked by the affair, which took place four days after they had signed the Geneva Convention. They begged me to use my good offices with the Arabs to persuade them that it was an isolated incident. I replied that I would try, but did not hide my displeasure nor my fears for the future. The Arabs were absolutely furious and totally discouraged. For their part, they had no further hopes of anything good coming from the Jewish side, and could not help wondering whether it would not be better to abandon such humanitarian ideas as they had concerning the Jews. It was not easy to appease them, or to persuade them that the mistakes of one people can in no way excuse those of another. On the contrary, we said, the fact that the Arabs had kept their promise would prove to the world their honesty and faithfulness to their word of honour. We assured them that our long experience made it impossible that we should doubt them, and that we knew that they would act with dignity and humanity, whatever happened. After this memorable meeting, we had the impression that all was not lost, although it had been a very near thing.

c) by Jon Kimche

From W. Khalidi (ed.), From Haven to Conquest *(Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1971), pp. 775–776.*

Dir Yassin was one of the few Arab villages whose inhabitants had refused permission for foreign Arab volunteers to use it as a base for operations against the Jewish life-line into Jerusalem; they had on occasions collaborated with the Jewish Agency. On Friday, April

9th, 1948, a commando force composed of Irgun and Stern soldiers raided the village. There was no obvious occasion for them to do so. What happened afterwards has been the subject of conflicting versions, explanations and excuses by the terrorists; but nothing they have said has explained, or can explain away, the murder of some 250 innocent Arabs, among them more than a hundred women and children. No less disgusting was the subsequent publicity parade by the Irgun of a number of poor Arab prisoners through the streets of Jerusalem.

The massacre of Dir Yassin was the darkest stain on the Jewish record throughout all the fighting. It is historically important because it was to become the beginning of a second legend with which the terrorists sought to serve their cause and justify their deeds. Just as they had claimed credit for the British decision to leave Palestine as being the result of the terrorists' attacks on British troops, so later they justified the massacre of Dir Yassin because it led to the panic flight of the remaining Arabs in the Jewish State area and so lessened the Jewish casualties.

But, at the time of the massacre, the Irgun had not thought of this excuse. They made the usual charge against the Haganah, that the Haganah knew of the operation; they explained that their force had been cornered by a superior force and had been compelled to shoot its way out as best as it could; but not till some time after did they claim it to have been an attempt to demoralize the Arab ranks—for it had been intended as a showpiece for the terrorists and nothing else. It was a cheap, ghastly and disgusting publicity stunt.

3. Our Fight for Freedom

Article by Menahem Begin, Israel Magazine *(Tel Aviv), vol. V, no. 3–4 (Spring 1973), pp. 48–51.*

The Irgun fought for the liberation of the Land of Israel, which was called Palestine by other nations. This is a rather intentional misnomer, calling our land after the Philistines, Israel's ancient enemy in the pre-Maccabean era. During various periods, we were joined in the struggle against British rule by the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (the "Stern Gang"), and by the Hagana. It was the first revolt since the Maccabees to have succeeded.

Our struggle for the regaining of our country reached its peak in the late forties. It should be noted, however, that until after the Second World War, almost all the Arab peoples lived under the direct rule or indirect tutelage of the British, French, and Italians. Many of their leaders were Axis sympathizers and collaborators with the Nazis. That fifth column was active in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere, including the misnamed Palestine. And it should be recalled—many either don't remember or tend to forget—that for all the years of the Jewish revolt against British colonial rule, not one Arab in the country raised a finger against that rule. Let it therefore be emphasized that, in our own time, "Palestine" was liberated by fighting Jews, and by them only.

I am going to take a retrospective glimpse at that struggle, while confining myself, for obvious reasons, to the role of the Irgun, the National Military Organization which I was privileged to command between the dark winter of 1943 and the shining summer of 1948.

We fought for freedom, but also for salvation. In the early forties, the Germans started to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe. A sentence of death was passed by a civilized state on millions of men, women, and children, and was methodically carried out. The victims cried out for help. Such a call—Save our very souls!—had never before been issued in history. But it was not heeded. Did the world officially say: "Let them perish"? No. Not in so many clear,

horrible words. But the world did ask, repeatedly, in diplomatic chancelleries, or around international conference tables: "What are we going to do with the Jews? Where are we going to put them?"

These were not rhetorical questions. They were answered primarily by the British. The country called Palestine was under their direct rule, cloaked as a Mandate on behalf of the defunct League of Nations. In that internationally ratified Mandate, "the historic connection between Palestine and the Jewish people" was recognized; the pledge, originally embodied in the Balfour Declaration, to reconstitute a national home for the Jewish people, was underwritten.

A national home. In simple, human language it is a clear concept. Under international law it was, admittedly, a new term. It became one of the most obscure words in the political literature of the twentieth century under the weight of countless interpretations issued by the Colonial and Foreign Offices in London. There was endless play with the words *in* and *as*. The British contended that they did not promise to construct Palestine *as* a National Home for the Jewish people, but to establish such a home *in* Palestine. Through such use, or misuse, of a common expression, an attempt was made to prove that even if the smallest part of the country called Palestine were made into a Jewish National Home, the British would have fulfilled this famous promise.

But while the Whitehall masters of interpretations indulged in the game of differentiating between *as* and *in,* Hitler took power in Germany and started his conquest of Europe. His intentions towards the Jews were made clear to all. "The next war will mean the destruction of European Jewry." So he said for the whole world to hear, from the platform of his Reichstag. At that time, we were advised not to pay attention to such threats. They are being used for domestic propaganda, we were told. But there was a man among the Jews who warned his people not to accept that wise, statesmanlike advice. The Irgun was under his nominal command. His name: Ze'ev Jabotinsky. But worried people prefer a drug to disquieting reality. Leaders, ministers, diplomats, and famous journalists explained, with all the authority of their offices and pens, that the German Fuehrer "has to" use such menacing words in order to strengthen his grip over his own followers. The bulk of our people were lulled into not taking the

threat seriously but rather accepting a sophisticated explanation.

The destruction of European Jewry started. The systematic slaughter began. When does a people need a national home more than when it is not only persecuted but massacred, annihilated? However, such was the confrontation of historic facts in the early forties: the Germans were destroying the Jewish people and the British were keeping the national home of the Jewish people closed. And while proclaiming that the Jews cannot and would not be allowed to enter Palestine, and that the Jewish National Home in Palestine was already established, the British rulers of the Land of Israel persisted with the question, "What are we going to do with thousands of Jews, if they could be rescued from Nazi Europe?" Consequently, there was no other factual reply except: "Let them perish."

Mr. Sherwood, in his book *The Hopkins Papers,* tells us about discussions conducted and notes exchanged between Cordell Hull, the U.S. Secretary of State, and Mr. Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary. They prove the factuality of that reply. But the ultimate, historic evidence of how our people were left in the hands of the mass executioner was revealed to us by Mr. Arthur D. Morse in his book *While Six Million Died.*

In this book we find the text of a letter sent to the American Ambassador in London on December 15, 1943, by the British Minister of Economic Warfare which says: "We have now received the views of the Foreign Office on the proposal of the U.S. Treasury to license the remittance to Switzerland of $25,000 as a preliminary installment to be expended on the rescue of Jews from France and Rumania. The Foreign Office is concerned with the difficulties of disposing of any considerable number of Jews should they be rescued." In other, undiplomatic words, the British Government was not concerned in December 1943 with any attempt to rescue the Jews, but with the grave problem of what to do with them "should they be rescued."

Nearly a year earlier, on January 21, 1943, Mr. Harrison, the American Consul in Switzerland, transmitted to the State Department a serious warning, addressed to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, about the wholesale extermination of the Jews. On February 10, a cable containing the following official advice reached Mr. Harrison from

Washington: "It is suggested that in the future, reports submitted to you for transmission to private persons in the United States should not be accepted unless extraordinary circumstances make such action advisable."

What were the "ordinary" circumstances which seemingly made such action inadvisable? Harrison's cable had contained information that every day 6,000 Jews were being put to death.

While Six Million Died contains other documents which are not only revealing, but also decisive lessons for our own time and for future generations.

In the underground, we had no information about such documents. What we knew were the manifest facts alone. What we guessed were the decisions behind them. What we saw was enough to draw conclusions for our generation and, indeed, for all time. The Jewish people were being physically destroyed because they were deprived of their national home. Because they were homeless, the Foreign Office, and all the other offices and departments, even of democratic countries, were deeply concerned with unsurmountable difficulties in disposing of any considerable number of Jews "should they be rescued." Thus homelessness means annihilation; a home means salvation.

Such was our innermost conviction when we went out to fight for the liberation of our ancient homeland: This was the only way to save our people. It became an absolute necessity of life itself, to dissolve the political bonds which had connected our country with the British Empire. We explained the unprecedented causes in a proclamation posted in January 1944. There we said, *inter alia:*

. . . This struggle will demand many and great sacrifices. But we shall wage it in the conviction that we are faithful to our brethren who have been, and are being, massacred, that for their sake we fight, and that their last will in death, we sanctify. This is our demand: Power in the Land of Israel should be transferred immediately to a provisional Jewish Government.

The Jewish Government of the Land of Israel will:

Form a national Jewish Army;

Negotiate the mass evacuation of European Jewry to the Land of Israel;

Propose an honorable peace and friendly relations to all neighbors of independent Eretz Yisrael;

Assure full equality of rights to the Arab population.

And further;

The formation of the Jewish Government ... is the only way to save our people, our future, and our dignity. There is no other. We shall fight. Every Jew in our homeland will fight. God will help us. There is no retreat. Liberty or death. And if you help your fighting men, with your own eyes you will soon see the Return to Zion and the Redemption of Israel.

Some people, in fact many of them, derided these words on first reading. Eventually, a provisional Jewish Government was formed; a national Jewish Army was raised; evacuation of persecuted Jewish communities to the Land of Israel was negotiated and carried out. But, indeed, four and a half years of struggle were to pass after the proclamation was published until the demands were fulfilled. During that time, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children, who could have been saved, died. There was no Jewish Government when trains brought them, day in day out, into a station called Auschwitz.

Every man in the fighting underground was imbued with the feeling of urgency and absolute necessity to fight for our liberation and salvation. That feeling was an immeasurable source of moral strength. Of course, in an unequal fight of the few against overwhelming forces, morale alone is not enough. You need at least some arms. You need a sound strategy and the right tactics. All these combined may bring you victory after a protracted struggle and much suffering. But moral strength is *the* source. It does not make you victorious; it makes you invincible.

Such an invincible man appeared one day before a British Military Tribunal in occupied Jerusalem, and said unto the uniformed judges:

"Officers of the occupation army, you want to create a regime of the gallows in *Eretz Yisrael,* a country which is destined to become a tower of light to mankind. In your foolish wickedness you assume that through such a regime you will break the spirit of our people for whom the globe became a place of execution. You are wrong. You will learn that what you face is steel. It is burning steel. You are not going to break it. You will burn your hands.

"How amazing is blindness. Don't you see the kind of men who rose against you in this campaign? It is unparalleled in the annals of mankind. Are you going to frighten us with death? We are those who listened for years to the rolling wheels of the trains which brought our brothers, our parents, the best of our people to slaughter. We are those who ask ourselves every day: Are we any better than the millions of our brethren? Why are we alive? We all could have been among them in the long days of fear, in the last minutes of agony. In our conscience there is one reply to all these questions. We have been spared, not in order to live and to work in conditions of slavery and oppression, awaiting another Treblinka. We have been kept alive in order to assure life, liberty, and dignity to us, to our people, to our children's children from generation to generation. Our lives were spared so that what happened there will never happen again. Therefore, we cannot be frightened. We have learned—and at what price!—that there is a life worse than death, and there is a death greater than life."

The man who made that statement was Meir Feinstein. He lost an arm in a battle with the British forces. He was sentenced to death. Meir of the Irgun and his cellmate Moshe Barzani of the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, preferred to die at their own hands; a hand grenade was smuggled to them, and they died with it between their hearts.

The same fearlessness, in the face of judge and executioner, was shown to an astonished world by every one of the men of the fighting underground who went to the gallows singing to their last breath the *Hatikvah,* the song of Hope—to return to the land of our forefathers "and to be a free nation in our own land." Liberty or death. So we declared. And every one of us was prepared for the latter, in the cause of the former.

Such was the aim and such the determination. What was the method of our fight?

In the course of four years, the Irgun carried out hundreds of military operations in order to force the British to leave the Land of Israel and thus enable the formation of a provisional Jewish Government, until a democratically elected one would come into being.

None of those attacks ever intended to hurt civilians, be they Jews, Arabs, or British. On the contrary, whenever civilians were supposed to be in or near a target, they were warned in advance to evacuate it or to keep away.

In the spring of 1945, before the fall of the Third Reich, we still refrained from attacking British military installations, according to the limitation we imposed upon ourselves, at the beginning of our renewed campaign. The reason: we did not want to impair the war against the enemy of mankind, Nazi Germany. Consequently, we started attacking military objectives after May 1945.

But as we could not wait until the last Jew in Europe was gassed and burned because his national home was denied to him, and no other country either in the West or in the East was ready to grant him asylum, we chose the various offices of the British Government as legitimate targets for inevitable attack.

In the early spring of 1945, we planned to attack with automatic-firing mortars made by our own men. I should add that for all the years of our constant fight against a mighty imperial army, we did not get even one rifle or one round of ammunition from any country in the world. The weapons with which we fought were mainly captured from the British forces through subterfuge and in direct battle, or were invented and produced by our men. No state, army or military staff, neither Moscow nor Peking, supplied us with arms, ammunition, or explosives. We fought alone, I don't know of any other modern underground organization that had to rely on itself so completely as did the Irgun. No one helped us, although our fight and the heroism of our fighters aroused deep sympathy and understanding in many countries of the world. From the beginning to the end we stood alone.

Our mortars too were not supplied, but homemade. But before we trained them against the British offices, the following warning was posted all over the country:

The oppressive government is called upon to evacuate, without delay, children, women, officials, and civilians from its offices and buildings throughout the country.

We ask the civilian population, Jewish, Arab, and others, not to visit

government offices or to stay in their vicinity from now until the warning is recalled, because of the danger.

After May 1945, and until the British High Commissioner left Haifa for his native England, we incessantly attacked military objectives in our occupied country. The railway lines, used by the enemy for transportation of troops and arms, were one such objective. But, again, we warned the civilian population to this effect:

Mines were laid on all the main lines of the State Railway used for transportation of army units and military equipment. We warn the civilian engineers and the population—Jews and Arabs—not to use trains. Every train may strike a mine and be destroyed.

And another warning:

Following the attacks by soldiers of the Jewish underground, all railway traffic was stopped at night; but in daylight the railways are being used for military purposes. We therefore announce that during the day too, trains may strike mines on the main lines except Haifa-Zemach and Haifa-Kiryat Motzkin. A warning is given to the civilian population—Jewish and Arab—not to go by train, because of the danger. This early warning is being issued in order to avoid casualties among civilians. The readers of this warning are asked to inform their neighbors, Jews and Arabs alike.

Such were the ethics we, the men of the Irgun, followed in our fight for national liberation.

The British knew, from accumulated experience, that the Irgun did not bluff.

Usually, therefore, they took our warnings seriously. But one of our most serious and famous warnings went unheeded—and a great tragedy ensued. I refer to our operation against the headquarters of the British Army and the section of the Central Government in a sequestered wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. In those days the renowned hotel was like a fortress, seemingly impenetrable. The men of the Irgun penetrated it. Because of the civilians staying there, the explosion was delayed for half an hour and warnings were given to immediately evacuate the hotel. But Mr. Shaw, the head of the administration under His Majesty's High Commissioner, having received an urgent call from a police officer telling him that the Jews say there are bombs in the King David Hotel and it should be evac-

uated at once, answered in anger and foolish pride: "I am not here to receive orders from the Jews; I give them orders." And so he ordered Jew, Briton, and Arab not to leave the hotel. Then came the shuddering explosion which destroyed a whole wing of the hotel and caused many casualties which we did our best to avoid. Why did the high official behave like that? Even today, I do not presume he had sinister intentions, as others tended to suspect.

Mr. Shaw, perhaps, assumed that our sole intention was to humiliate his government and make them flee. And as our men, duly instructed, exploded a small scare-bomb before the main operation was scheduled to begin, in order to disperse passers-by for their own safety, it is possible that he believed no more explosions would take place. Until this very day, we don't know what in fact moved Mr. Shaw to forbid and prevent the evacuation of the hotel. But the fact was established, by British sources themselves, that our warning system worked well. The tragedy was caused by false pride, or miscalculation, of a haughty colonial official.

Every war is cruel. We waged a guerrilla war against a mighty empire and its modern, armed forces which tried to destroy us with all the means at their command, including deportation, the whip, and the hangman's noose. Therefore, I do not wish to deny that cruel deeds were carried out, in the course of the struggle, by both sides. As for the Irgun, we never took the initiative in such acts. We acted only in retaliation with the declared intent to stop the enemy from further such actions, which would have brought repeated retaliation. That intent, usually, was achieved. Further humiliation was avoided. Human lives were saved.

Why did we never attack B.O.A.C. planes? The answer is simple: it just would not occur to us to do so. Our men attacked British airfields and destroyed, in one night, more than 25 heavy bombers and other military planes. We had men in many parts of the world as determined as their comrades operating in the Land of Israel. Yet, we did not even think about sending them to attack a civilian plane lest we endanger a woman or a child, or any civilian in such a plane.

But didn't the Irgun attack the British Embassy in Rome? Yes,

it did. However, the most detailed instructions were given to do whatever possible in order to avoid civilian casualties. The instructions were carried out. Casualties were avoided. Not one Italian was hurt in that well-known operation on foreign soil.

Thus the men of the Irgun fought relentlessly, with unlimited readiness for self-sacrifice, to liberate our country, to save our people. The clean method of their fight—as witnessed by foreign observers and writers—was appropriate to its noble aim: The liberation of the Jewish people.

4. Speech made at the 11th Convention of the Herut Movement (excerpt). Tel Aviv, 29 September 1974

Published as an advertisement in The Jerusalem Post, *15 October 1974, p. 4.*

On the threshold of the new year, our nation stands at the crossroads. The alternative is: either to maintain the historic achievements of the Six Day War and secure the country's future for generations to come, or to squander those achievements, undermine the foundations of national security and put the country and the people in permanent danger even in this generation; either to sustain our right to Eretz Israel, or to invite an invader into the liberated land and consequently bringing enemy forces within the immediate vicinity of our population centres; either to uphold two recognized political principles: that a state of war ends with a peace treaty, and that without peace, there can be no withdrawal whatsoever, or to waive those principles and enter into interim arrangements that mean Israeli withdrawals without peace.

In order to choose with open eyes between these two alternatives, we must ask a question and answer it: What are the designs of the enemy at this point? The answer was given very recently by an authoritative source. The Egyptian dictator stated to his own people and to the Americans: "The liberation of Sinai and the Golan Heights will not solve the problem and will not bring peace. It will be solved by restoring the rights of the Palestinian people." That is what Sadat said in Cairo. While he addressed himself over the NBC network to American public opinion he said: "I shall not agree to non-belligerency, even if Israel withdraws from Sinai:" to which he added in a positive vein: "I shall sign a peace agreement together with my friends the Syrians, Jordanians and Palestinians.

Let us look more closely at this double answer. Liberating Sinai and the Golan Heights—what does that mean, coming from Sadat? It means that the settlements in the Northern valleys, including Tiberias, will be within the range of the guns which the Communist

super-Power has so generously supplied to the Syrians, and that the settlements in the Negev will also be within the range of enemy fire. And in spite—or perhaps because—of that, Sadat announces in advance that there will be no peace for Israel.

Second: he will sign a peace agreement together with the Syrians, the Jordanians and the Palestinians. What do the Syrians want? The Golan Heights, and more than that; for does Assad not refer to Israel as "Southern Syria?" What do the Jordanians want? We have heard that from Hussein: Judea and Samaria, East Jerusalem, perhaps also Gaza and a corridor to connect them; for those are the parts of Eretz Israel which, he claims, will be under his rule.

What the Egyptians want, Sadat has told us himself. What do the so-called Palestinians want? That has been answered in writing. The document is called the "Palestinian Charter," and with regard to us its main clause says: "The establishment of the Jewish State is null and void."

Now we know. In the positive version, Sadat has told the Americans that he is prepared to sign a peace agreement; with whom? Not with the State of Israel, but with a Jewish State that exists no longer.

Asked about his plans for the Palestinians, the Egyptian ruler refused to reply several times. Usually, he said he had proposals, but was not yet prepared to talk about them. This time he has been explicit. It was he himself who announced that the roof organization of the murderers of Kiryat Shmonah, Shamir and Ma'alot, must represent the Arabs in Eretz Israel.

What they have to say about the State of Israel that was established in 1948—that its establishment is null and void—we have read. In other words: While Heykal, a few weeks ago, explained that the rights of the Palestinians would be restored either in the form of a "secular State," meaning the absolute elimination of the State of Israel, or in the form of a State according to the Bernadotte Plan—and we all remember what that means—Sadat went even farther in the two statements we have quoted here, by identifying himself absolutely with the Charter of the so-called Palestinians and therefore calling for the complete elimination of the Jewish State. Those are the enemy's aspirations.

If an Israeli Government can stand up and declare, in the face of these clear political facts, that it is possible, in return for territorial concessions, to get the Arab rulers to agree that, while most of the areas which had come under Israeli rule in the Six Day War will be handed over to the Arabs, part of them will remain in Israel's hands —as I said, with Arab approval—if a Government would stand up in Israel and claim this, it would assume a grave responsibility, or be totally irresponsible. That would be knowingly misleading the people of Israel. History has taught us that every people pays a price for accepting the political lies which it is offered. We shall uphold the truth among our people. It is our duty to save it and denounce the deceit to which it is being exposed, particularly these last few months.

The way in which our people is being misled also has repercussions abroad. Our information effort would gain a powerful impact and our national policy would have a strong effect if we come to friendly nations and tell them the truth: that the Arab rulers want no peace of any description with Israel, that they seek to destroy it, and that they no longer even conceal that ambition: by their absolute identification with the murder organizations and their Charter, they tell us so in so many words. Their statements, their threats, are worse than those which preceded Munich. They tell us explicitly: Even if you withdraw completely, you shall not have peace; on the contrary, we shall continue to try and destroy your State. That is what they tell us in advance.

If we make that clear, friendly nations will understand why we cannot be asked to give up our security, to allow enemy forces near our population centres, to make it easier for the enemy to try and destroy our country.

But friendly nations are being told that the Government of Israel is prepared to concede very much and only asks the Arabs to agree to leave Israel something after the Six Day War. Those nations are getting tired and will say—in effect, they are saying it already: "The Arabs are not prepared to accept your demands, so concede a little more; the difference is no longer very great, even according to your own plans, of which we know." That is why misleading our people knocks the foundations out from under our diplomatic and information

efforts amongst friendly nations.

That is the background against which we must see the political retreat of the last year, which also has very serious implications. There was an agreed policy which was accepted by nearly the whole nation, with the exception of Rakach; in effect it said that after all the wars that had been waged against us, after all the sacrifices, we would this time, after the Six Day War, demand true peace, expressed in peace treaties in which the parties acknowledge that the state of war is terminated, and in which borders are defined; and failing peace treaties, the situation as established at the time of the cease-fire would be maintained in full.

That policy has broken down. Instead of peace treaties, the Prime Minister and his colleagues call for interim arrangements. And while the Prime Minister has told the Administration in Washington that we are ready either for overall peace agreements or for interim arrangements, he should have realized that the moment the little word "or" passed his lips, the first part of his statement vanished.

What remains, are interim arrangements that do not require peace, that disconnect any step backwards by Israel from peace. All they mean, is further withdrawals, in stages, without peace. For the leading principle of "peace treaties and no withdrawal without them" has been given up, and without that principle, the Government's policy leads, and cannot but lead, to giving up both territory and peace.

Instead of the demand for peace, we suddenly hear about "non-belligerency." That is a vague concept that is open to many interpretations, but let me tell you how this nebulous idea came into the world.

Long before the Yom Kippur War, there was a proposal for a partial settlement along the Suez Canal. At that time, the Government still insisted that not a single Egyptian soldier should cross the Canal, and that there could at most be a civilian administration East of Suez. At that time, the Government said: "But the one condition of such a settlement that cannot be waived is an Egyptian declaration of non-belligerency."

After the Yom Kippur War, there was talk, in connection with

the disengagement agreement, of our making the agreement conditional on an Egyptian declaration of non-belligerency. Then again that condition was dropped.

Today, non-belligerency is already being demanded in connection with a further withdrawal in Sinai—and I can tell you that it is not a question of a few kilometres, but of quite a deep withdrawal. However, Sadat says: Not only will I not agree to non-belligerency after a further withdrawal, even if it is a deep one, in Sinai; even if you pull out from the whole peninsula, we will not agree to non-belligerency. Non-belligerency can be considered only if you return to the lines of 4th of June, 1967, in all sectors and the agreement must include the Palestinians.

It is the same old political rule again: one concession leads to another. The concession is noted, and the new demands, after the concession, are still to come.

In view of these developments, the leaders of the Alignment should ask themselves two questions: why have all their forecasts about the fateful question of war or peace between us and the Arab States proved so completely wrong? For they have: between '47 and '49, between '49 and '56, between '57 and '67, between '67 and '73, and since the signing of the disengagement agreements on both fronts, to this very day.

Why has every promise of the Alignment that the past war would be the last one and that from there on we would go in the direction of peace, been followed by another war? Why were we told only a few months ago, after the disengagement agreements, that Egypt would become introvert and concern itself no longer with all-Arab problems, and that we could very soon have a peace agreement—and nothing remains of all those promises but a sad memory?

This has been going on for a long time—for more than a quarter of a century; and since 1970 and the commitment to withdrawal and the renewed partition of Western Eretz Israel, another four years have passed. The answer is simple: in policy, as in logic, the conclusions will be correct only if the premise is true. But if the premise is unfounded, all the conclusions will be absurd.

Now the true premise is that those who have not acknowledged

the right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, do not want to acknowledge the right of our people to part of the Land of Israel. That premise remains as true today as it was in 1947 and 1948: we have heard so only yesterday in Cairo, and only last week on NBC.

The second question they must ask themselves is: What has happened since the commitment to a withdrawal, to far-reaching territorial concessions, even to giving up the heartland of the country and of the nation, Judea and Samaria? What has happened in the international sphere?

The large majority of African States have broken off diplomatic relations with us; Western Europe has turned its back on us, and part of the countries of Latin America, including the two principal countries, are beginning to follow suit. We have come to the point where the United Nations Organization is about to grant official recognition to the murder organization which we have lately started to refer to as the PLO.

The very use of that name is a gross moral and spiritual capitulation: Palestinian Liberation Organization! And it is we, the Jews, who are saying that. Liberation from what? From whom? Palestine —that means, no Land of Israel. We should have called this murderers' organization all along by its right name ARNO—Arab Nazi Organization. For that is its right name. Their ambition is to destroy a State and annihilate a people, and their acts are consistent with that design. That is why the civilian population is the target of their attacks and men, women and children are murdered with malice aforethought.

What has Arafat said? "Peace with Israel means the destruction of Israel." And what did King Hassan of Morocco tell us? The ARNO people—in colloquial Hebrew we call them the PLO people—told him that they will disembowel every Jew and every pregnant Jewish woman, "so as to kill the child in her womb." The King of Morocco was shocked.

But we have come to the point where the United Nations are about to recognize ARNO, the Arab Nazi Organization, and to allow them to speak from their rostrum. All this: the estrangement of Africa, Western Europe and Latin America, the recognition of the ARNO

by the UN—when, under which Government, did this happen?

If we were running the country's affairs, or if the breakdown of July 1970 had not happened and the National Unity Government would still exist and we would be part of it, on the basis of the policy in force before the breakdown, we would now be told that that is what comes from being "stubborn": and that if we had been willing to announce concessions, all this would not have happened to us in the outside world. But the fact is that all that has happened in the international sphere, has happened under a Government that is prepared to surrender Judea and Samaria to the Arabs.

Those who are in charge of the nation's affairs, must ask themselves these two questions: Why have all their forecasts about war and peace in the last twenty-six years and in the last four years proved wrong, and why has everything that has gone wrong for us in international relations gone wrong under their administration, while they were preaching the policy of concessions that endanger the future of the nation and undermine the foundations of its security?

The conclusion is that one should not say that all this has come about in spite of the policy of retreats, but on the contrary, because of that policy, as I have already explained. If you are already prepared to concede so much, what matters a strip of land here and a strip of land there? Give that up, too, and you will have an agreement, as you yourselves say.

Our alternative policy, against that, gave the country a protective political perimeter: a peace treaty, direct negotiation for the signing of a peace treaty, as is the rule among nations. Why should Israel be the exception, the only exception? Do the people of Israel, after so many wars, not deserve true peace? Those are the two principles that are accepted among all nations, and we ourselves should accept the view that what applies to all nations, does not apply to the Jews, certainly in so crucial a question as war or peace?

Moreover, as the Arab rulers themselves say, even with a total withdrawal we will not have peace, but, as they tell us explicitly, we will have to agree to remove ourselves from the scene. How can one expect us to commit such folly? Who has the right to demand of us that we make it easy for them to try and carry out such a plan?

While we are talking about these great issues, we must reject two negative statements that have been made recently by the Prime Minister and his colleagues. The one is: We are isolated, and it cannot be helped and in order to make a virtue out of this unfortunate necessity, the Prime Minister reminded us: "The people shall dwell alone."

Why pick that particular verse from Balaam's words? Balaam also made other important statements; for instance: "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" Or—another leading principle in the history of man—"Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curses thee."

"Dwell alone" politically? We may question even what the tendency is in a spiritual sense. Micah prophesied: "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the Law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Though from the spiritual viewpoint we should perhaps remember that it was Micah who also said: "For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever."

But, as everyone will agree, what has that to do with policy? Why must the people of Israel be isolated politically? We have enemies, and that means that we need friends, and if possible, allies.

Now, more than ever, we have an opportunity of gaining or regaining friends. Something has happened in the world, which has been thrown into shock by Pan-Arabic imperialism. As we have warned in the past, Pan-Arabic imperialism is no less of a danger to humanity than Pan-German imperialism, or than what was and under its ideological camouflage remains Pan-Slavic imperialism.

These days it is being demonstrated to the whole free world what dangers it must expect from Pan-Arabism or from Pan-Arabic imperialism. Incessant territorial expansion, oppression of all minorities, and it is no mere chance that Heykal has lately been speaking again of a land link between Egypt and the Arab East. We are at Sharm-esh-Sheikh, and he is speaking about Eilat.

From the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic shores—twenty States want yet another little country the only one of the Jewish people. And what have they done now? By means of their Pan-Arabist oil policy, led by Sadat, they undermine the very foundations of the existence of the entire world, upset its economy and its currency system, threaten its freedom and even its honour; a handful of sheikhs in the sands of whose desert domains oil wells have been found, dictate, or try to dictate, policy to great, free nations.

I can testify that even more than half a year ago, when the Arab oil embargo was in force, there was strong anger in Europe against the Arabs, and that goes also for America. I was at a conference of members of 11 European parliaments; we have followed the press; we have heard what the media had to say. The characteristic and important point is that no one said that it was because of Israel, and all the powerful wave of wrath was directed against the boycotters.

Every free country suffers from increasingly fast galloping inflation and economic instability. On the other hand, the very poorest among the nations must surrender the last of their resources to get oil. In view of these clear facts, this is a unique opportunity for Israel to go out and gain friendship and understanding on a basis of common interests in the whole free world.

Add to that a beginning awareness of the true meaning of the so-called *détente* between the USSR and the USA. In fact, let us take a look at the result of this *détente* in terms of the real interests of the free world and particularly of the USA.

America has paid the Arab States billions of dollars for oil. Russia sells arms to the Arab States for billions of dollars. In other words, Russia obtains billions of American dollars, and meanwhile stands by and looks at the economy of the democratic countries being destroyed by its allies. Is that *détente?* Is that how the future of the free world is to be assured? This is a unique opportunity for Israel by addressing its information effort also to the basics of international politics, to be not a problem, but a factor, to regain understanding, friendship and support.

There is no justification at all for the argument that our international isolation is a must. On the contrary, we must not be isolated,

we must not fatalistically allow others to isolate us. We have enemies; we need friends and allies. Just now, Israel has an opportunity of gaining them because of a development which did not exist only a few years ago.

Another negative statement which we must reject and replace by a positive one: We are being told these last few days that our armed forces will no longer deter aggression, but decide the outcome of war if it breaks out. We must on no account agree to this turn for the worse.

First of all, of course, I must question the wisdom of making such a statement where the enemy can hear it: The IDF can no longer deter you from attacking. Is such loose talk necessary?

But what is more important than all the talk are the actual facts. We are convinced that our armed forces can continue to deter aggression. Again, we must not fatalistically accept the idea that wars are inevitable. If the elected political authority takes the right decisions, and consequently our armed forces are ready, alert and deployed in the right places, they can be a deterrent factor and thus prevent wars.

The proof is what happened on Yom Kippur: Our enemies were afraid to attack us, so they did all they could to mislead us. They did not attack until they were absolutely sure that our army was not mobilized and stood far from the front; and then it was of course no deterrent. When seven divisions attack a few hundred men on the Southern front, then they will of course cross the Canal; and they celebrate that crossing to this very day. But if our forces had been where they should have been, there would have been no Canal crossing but a crushing victory and our people would have peace, if not in name then at least in fact, for many years, perhaps for this whole generation.

Or, if the army had been ready, the war might not have broken out at all, and any war that can be postponed, can be postponed for a long time.

There is your proof that the IDF can be a deterrent, that is to say, prevent bloody attacks, if the conditions are right. That is why we must continue to build it up, and why we must tell our enemies what a deterrent means: that if they attack, they will be roundly defeated.

That must of course be backed up by facts, not by words: a mighty army like we have built up, but ready, alert, watchful and deployed where it needs to be when there is need, while maintaining the strategic depth without which the very existence of the State is liable to be in continuous danger, because of the range of the new weapons which our enemies have been given.

No fatalism, not in policy and not in the army, but thought directed at gaining friends and support and preventing the enemy's attacks: that is the right way.

Now, my friends, in this part of my speech I would like to put a few ideas and proposals to you. Just as I have tried in its first part to give an answer to the question, in which direction we should act, I shall try in its second part to indicate what we should do.

a) We continue to be in favour of establishing a Government of national unity. To us, the decisive argument is that the nation is in danger, and at such times, a free people unites. As we see it, a National Coalition can be established in spite of the profound differences of opinion, on the basis of the one single principle of non-compulsion: No one is to be compelled to accept principles or to give up his principles.

No more of that. I think there is nothing we need to add to this simple statement. The Alignment refuses to establish a National Coalition. As long as it persists in that refusal, for reasons we know only too well, we have nothing to add to what we have said about the need and the possibility of establishing a National Coalition.

We represent a powerful segment of the people. Only ten months ago, we won the confidence of 473 thousand free men and women citizens. 42% of all Israel's soldiers voted for us. We did not water down any of our principles when we went to the people and asked them for their confidence. We came with a clear platform, with historical, political, moral, social and economic principles.

The first principle we presented was: The right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel is inalienable, and is one with our people's right and aspiration to security and peace. Any proposal resulting in the renewed partition of Western Eretz Israel must be rejected. The sovereignty of the State in the liberated areas of the country should be

implemented also by law. That is what we said, and for this principle we received the confidence of hundreds of thousands of citizens, one third of the nation.

There is no justification, no reason, why the representatives of such an electorate should beg "admittance." Three times national coalition governments have been formed, and we know how they have been formed: in mutual respect and with the desire to work together. Only on such a basis can a National Coalition be established in Israel.

Second, I want to ask this Council to authorize the representatives of Herut on the Likud Executive to introduce there the following proposal: That Likud calls upon the people, in the near future, to sign a citizens' petition to the Knesset about Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria.

I think that the text of such a petition could be more or less as follows: (of course, this is only a draft that will be put up for discussion and can be amended or changed): "To the Knesset:—We, the undersigned citizens of Israel, having regard to our people's right to Eretz Israel, to security, to settlement and to peace, call upon the Knesset to assure that Judea and Samaria will be under Israel's sovereignty, and inseparable part of the State."

I am able to tell the Council that preliminary discussions with spokesmen of the components of Likud have shown that there is general agreement on their part to endorse this proposal.

These are no ordinary times. We must go to the people, we must appeal to every citizen of Israel: "This is your concern: act." Let us all act together. For this action we will all have to do our share, to volunteer. The preparations will take some time. If, as I hope, the Likud Executive will approve the proposal, we shall act on two levels: wherever people gather, and also from house to house.

Let the people have its say! This is where our fate is at stake: Judea and Samaria, the ancient heartland of the nation, the cradle of our culture and the foundation of our security. There are grounds for believing that, contrary to the demoralization which is being instilled amongst the people when they are told that a people can invite an invader, a conqueror into its liberated country after having defeated him and chased him out, that contrary to this official demor-

alization, the cause of Judea and Samaria is deeply felt in all ranks of the people, that hundreds of thousands will respond to our appeal. Let the people have its say.

Let us all volunteer and do the job, as we know how to do it in times when our fate is at stake: with dedication. Thus we shall help our people to assure its future.

We propose that the Knesset send a delegation to the US Congress. It should consist of members of the entire House, supporters and opponents of the Government. That also will be a demonstration of national unity, under the existing circumstances.

This delegation would have two assignments: To demand more weapons for Israel's defence and to demand the separation of the supply of such weapons from any pressure or so-called persuasion in favour of political concessions. I must say that, not officially, of course, but in practice, there is today some hint of a connection between the two. First of all, about weapons for defence: Yes, the US Government has agreed to supply us a certain quantity of modern defensive weapons, and we must acknowledge that, and if the Minister of Defence, the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister have made efforts to secure these essential supplies, we shall acknowledge their services.

But it is our duty to say that what has been secured, is not enough in terms of the balance of forces.

In the Yom Kippur War, it was proved that we can no longer permit ourselves to rely on quality vis-à-vis quantity, for two reasons: Our enemies have been given arms of high quality. I shall never forget what an officer in Sinai told us when we visited him there: "We have seen weapons of a higher quality than ours in the hands of the Egyptians." And when it comes to fire power, it has been proved that there is a point where a certain quantity turns into a new quality.

Since Washington promised to supply a certain quantity of defensive weapons, there have been changes that need to be taken into account. The USSR not only intensifies the supply of land, air and sea weapons to Syria, but is also about to resume arms supplies to Egypt. And the modern arms for our enemies come not only from Russia, but also from the West and even from the United States of America.

Sadat has not only admitted that Libya put Mirages from France at his disposal, but also that King Feisal of Saudi Arabia has given him weapons of extraordinary importance. Saudi Arabia does not receive even a single weapon from Russia. Its weaponry comes in the first place from the USA. That also goes for Quwait, and also for Jordan, and so forth. Even in view of the latest changes, it is our duty to say that what we are about to receive in the next few months, is no longer enough. We will have to have far more than has been promised us. We must not have to rely on another airlift. Those deterring or decisive weapons should be here.

I want to tell you that this proposal of ours has a good chance. We have some experience in these things. I cannot give you all the particulars, but there is one thing I can reveal: in three spheres of land arms, we suggested placing orders in the USA; the Government did not agree at first; they endorsed our proposals in course of time, and we have received those weapons.

Outside those three spheres, there is an item which we proposed to order and of which we were told at the time that there was no chance of obtaining it, and therefore there was no sense to ask for it. Finally, we asked for it and got it.

That is a valuable, meaningful experience. On the strength of it, we now propose this idea of an all-party Knesset delegation that, as is customary these days, will go to the US Congress, present the situation in its true light, and ask already now for an increase of supplies that are vital for our defence and for preventing enemy attacks.

In this matter, we have the fullest right to appeal to Israel's friends in the USA, Jews and non-Jews, and ask them to perform the civic act citizens of their great democratic country are accustomed to perform: to appeal to their President, day after day, in letters and telegrams and in other ways and to ask him for more arms for Israel. Israel, they should explain, is an ally of the free world and has proved that with deeds, not with words, particularly in the last seven years; Israel is being threatened every day with another war, unless she capitulates the Munich way or worse. More tools for Israel's defence. And the same appeal should also say: No connection whatsoever

between those tools of defence and any pressure on Israel to give in to demands of its enemies which would endanger its security and future.

If US Jewry stand up—and they are ready to do so—to make their influence felt directly—as is nowadays customary everywhere in the democratic world—if US Jewry stand up and sound this appeal day after day, and if they are joined by our non-Jewish friends all over the country, there are reasons for believing that Dr. Kissinger will not exactly try any longer to link limited supplies of weapons that are vital for defence with the demand: "You must withdraw without peace treaties. You must make interim arrangements."

That is also a proposal which has a good chance of success, and we are presenting it to our people at home and in the Diaspora, and particularly to the Jews in the USA.

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5. Speech made at the 12th Convention of the Herut Movement (excerpts). Hebron, 12 January 1975

Published as an advertisement in The Jerusalem Post, *4 February 1975, p. 4.*

From the city of our Fathers, the city of Caleb ben Yefuneh, the comrade who kept faith with Joshua and shared his trust that the Children of Israel would find the courage and strength to change the course of history and conquer the Land of Canaan; from the first royal residence of David, the greatest of Israel's captains and poets, we look to the future of our people in its land. Let it be to the future that we dedicate our deliberations.

We propose that Israel assume the initiative in establishing peace in the Middle East, and bring the following proposals to the attention of the Arab and other nations:

1. That an absolute armistice be agreed on between the Jews and the Arabs, for an initial period of three years.

2. That the armistice apply to the regular forces on land, at sea and in the air, and to any other force or organization bearing arms.

3. That, during these three years, an effort be made to establish peace between the two nations, by means of signed peace treaties between the Jewish State and its Arab neighbour States, in which the borders between them shall be laid down.

4. That an effort be made to find an agreed humane solution to the problem of the Arab refugees and their property and of the property of the Jewish refugees who have left the Arab States and come to Israel.

5. That every Government which is a party to the negotiations appoint representatives authorized to conduct them.

6. That the negotiating sessions be held alternately in Jerusalem and in the capitals of the neighbouring Arab States, or in a neutral place such as Geneva, Lausanne or San Remo.

7. That each party be entitled to present at the negotiations

whatever proposals it deems fit, in mutual recognition of the independence and sovereignty of the negotiating states.

8. That an official note containing these proposals be presented on behalf of the Government of Israel to the states adjoining Israel, and be brought to the attention of all states with which Israel maintains diplomatic relations, and that the contents of the note be brought to the attention of all nations through publication by appropriate means.

I should like to add to this Israeli peace initiative a few words of explanation to the Arabs.

Because of the historical dispute between our nations over the ownership of the Land of Israel, you have attempted, ten times in fifty-five years, to drown in blood our aspirations of returning to the land of our fathers and of our national revival. You attacked us in 1920, 1921, 1929, 1936, 1947, 1948, between 1949 and 1956, between 1957 and 1966, in 1967, and in 1973. Now let me ask the Arabs to consider: What have the results of these bloody attacks been, from your viewpoint and from ours? You have not succeeded in destroying us; on the contrary, we have increased in numbers and strength.

That is how it will continue, if you persist in your senseless ways. The tragedy of death affects both sides. You set out to kill us, even our little children, but it is you who are killed. Out of our knowledge of the elementary facts, we can tell you that you do not have the slightest chance of destroying our state, for two reasons:

First, our generation, the generation of destruction and revival, is the generation in which the *fighting Jew* has come to life again. For centuries, you and other nations in different parts of the world thought that this human type, the fighting Jew, had disappeared forever; but he has arisen and will not disappear again. You need only to look around in this very hall in Hebron to know what that means—the fighting Jew: Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Joseph Trumpeldor, the Jewish Battalions in the First World War, Tel Hai, Hagana, IZL, LHY, Palmach, the Jewish units in the Allied armies, Mahal, the pilots, paratroopers, tank crews, gunners—the fighting Jew; Moshe Dayan, Ariel Sharon—the fighting Jew—David Raziel, Abraham Yair, those who commanded the few when they stood against the many.

The fighting Jew is a human being. He is the son of a Jewish mother, that most marvellous of all God's creatures, with all the softness of her love and the heavy burden of her concern. The fighting Jew loves children, all children—Arab children, too, I assure you. The fighting Jew loves books, loves liberty and hates war, like Garibaldi, but he is prepared to fight for liberty.

The fighting Jew does not want to harm any Arab. He wants peace between us and all Arabs. But if you ever raise a hand against this people, know this: the fighting Jew is fearless, his heart is of steel, his hands are trained for war and his fingers for battle. He will strike the enemy, disperse him, repulse him and destroy him, and ensure that this people shall have life, freedom and human respect in the Land of its Fathers for all eternity.

Secondly, behind our just cause stands our renewed strength. We do not want to harm you, but in case you ever come to believe that you can endanger the existence of our State, know that we can destroy all the sources of your wealth.

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In the Diaspora, whole sections of our people are disappearing, no longer through physical annihilation, but through spiritual assimilation. Hundreds of thousands of Jews disappear. How can we stand by seeing all this assimilation, and do nothing? And there is something we can do. We cannot send them thousands and tens of thousands of our children, but we can invite thousands and tens of thousands of our young brothers from over there and teach them, essentially, two things: Hebrew and Scripture. They will return to the lands of the Dispersal and start schools there—if not day schools, then evening classes—and teach the younger generation Hebrew and Scripture. If they learn and study that, they will not be assimilated and there will be fewer mixed marriages.

The negotiations for peace treaties should, when the time comes, be conducted on Israel's part according to the doctrine endorsed by the majority of the nation as represented in the Knesset. We shall present the principles of the doctrine to which we have dedicated our lives, and make every effort to gain majority support for it.

These principles are:

1. Maintaining our right to the Land of Israel.

2. Striving for true peace with the Arab States, such peace to be laid down in peace treaties.

3. Failing peace, no further withdrawals, which merely bring the enemy forces closer to our population centres and endanger the security of the whole nation.

What does that mean—interim settlements? Withdrawals without peace are the ruin of the very chance of peace. Particularly dangerous would be withdrawal in the South, beyond the Jidi and Mitleh passes, and the surrender of the oil fields of Abu Rodeis. Those oilfields supply us with more than half our annual energy needs, and all other sources of supply will always be questionable.

It is being said that if we insist on these principles, we shall involve ourselves in a conflict with our great friend, the United States. You must not accept that intimidating mechanistic theory. There is a deep friendship between the United States and the State of Israel, which will continue.

Churchill, a great friend of Roosevelt, used to say: One must always realize where the focus of power and decision in the United States is. We can say today, from our observation and experience, that it is not true that, if we stand firm and act wisely, out of love for the Jewish people and the Land of Israel, out of love of liberty and peace, we shall be in conflict with America.

From Israel's viewpoint one may say, if I may borrow a phrase, that there are three Americas. There is the State Department, and in the State Department there are Arabists. They are prepared to sacrifice Israel's security and future for their theories. But in addition to this America, and it is a very small one, there are two other Americas. One is represented by the two Houses of Congress, the elected representatives of the great American people. Since the State of Israel came into existence, there has not yet been a Congress whose two Houses have been more favourable to us than this one. And then there is a third America, perhaps the America that matters most: the public opinion of a free country, that is also involved in crises of human freedom and always overcomes them. Public opinion in the United States, not only Jewish but also non-Jewish public opinion,

has never been bound by such strong bonds of sympathy to Israel as in these times.

There are grounds for being confident that, even if our position should at some point be contrary to that of the State Department, the other two mighty Americas—the elected representatives of the American people and free public opinion in the United States—would overcome the first. There can be no Munich in the Middle East. This little nation and that great nation, and other free nations with them, will make a stand against totalitarian aggression and the base oil blackmail which seeks to destroy great nations, humiliate them to the point of oppression and even ruin their lives. We can give an example of civic courage to other free peoples and make them realize their and our common interests.

For the right to the Land of Israel is *basic* and inseparable from our right to security, without which there can be no prospect of peace. The choice does not lie between maintaining our right to the Land of Israel and obtaining peace for a Jewish State in some part of the Land of Israel; the true choice lies between maintaining our right to the Land of Israel and endangering the existence of a Jewish State in any part of the Land of Israel. In order to prove the justice of our cause to many nations, we must mount a special campaign to explain the right of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel. We propose that our Masters and Teachers, the Chief Rabbis, convene a world conference of acknowledged rabbinical authorities in Jerusalem, including Rabbi Soloveitchik and Rabbi Schneerson and all the other great Rabbis, so that the appeal may be issued from Jerusalem and followed up by a continuous effort to explain to all nations and religions—also to the Vatican, which sent us a message and forgot to say that the Land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people—that the Land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people by right.

To the Arabs of the Land of Israel, we hold out our hand not only in peace, but in brotherhood. They will be given equality of rights in our country. They will enjoy cultural autonomy. They will have a free choice of citizenship. If they apply for Israeli citizenship, they will receive it; if they prefer their former or any other citizenship, they will not be forced to adopt ours. If they are citizens of Israel,

they will enjoy all citizens' rights, including that of voting for the Knesset; as foreign citizens, they will enjoy all rights, as individuals and as a nation, except that of voting for the Knesset, according to the same rules that apply to Jewish citizens or residents of the country. They will enjoy civic freedom, human respect, and social progress.

It is being argued that if we insist on our right to the Land of Israel, to security and peace, war is inevitable. Let us reject that argument. That is the voice of Chamberlain. All peoples believed that after May and September of the year 1938, the voice of Chamberlain would never be heard again. But it is heard again today, also from the State Department, and it says: If Israel does not surrender, does not continue to withdraw without peace, war in the Middle East is inevitable. That is the Munich system of pressure, and it is characteristic. My generation remembers a small, courageous, well equipped nation, with fortifications, a nation that knew how to say 'no' to the bloodthirsty; but its friends came and told it: surrender, or there will be war. For your own sake and for the sake of world peace, hand over your fortifications, for "demographic" reasons. In May, that people stood fast and did not move and did not surrender, but then came the pressure of its friends, and in September it bent its head. What remains of that country, and what has been the fate of the whole human race, after they listened to the voice of Chamberlain? There is no question of war being inevitable. The proof is there: Yom Kippur. When did our enemies attack us in the North and in the South? When they had come to the conclusion—so Sadat tells us—on Thursday afternoon, a day and a half before Yom Kippur, that we were not ready, that we had not mobilized, that our soldiers were far away and our armour was standing at base camps. Then, only then, did they attack us. Let us learn the lesson.

If our forces are ready and alert, the enemy will know that, if he attacks, he must expect a crushing defeat within the first few hours and he will shrink from attempting an act of aggression that is bound to fail. In view of our experience, we will do better to sound ten precautionary alerts than to make one single mistake of unreadiness. On no account must we accept the argument that war is inevitable, for that is Chamberlain's kind of argument, and its purpose is to put us under pressure.

Above all, there is the justice of our cause. But for our belief that our cause is just, that Zionism is one of the most wonderful things in human history, doing justice by redressing the greatest injustice since man emerged on earth, we would not have held our own in this fight.

There are grounds for assuming that we will be exposed to an accumulation of threats and pressures this year. To stand up to them, Israel needs a strong Government. Paradoxically in its hardest hours it has its weakest Government since the establishment of the State.

That is the truth. I acknowledge the good wishes of the Prime Minister and his suggestion that we may adopt constructive resolutions at this Convention. Indeed, I think that one of the most constructive decisions in Israel would be to hold new elections soon.

This Government lacks a moral mandate from the electorate. The Alignment electioneers claimed before the elections that the Geneva Conference was the road to peace; now we are told by the leader of the Alignment that the Geneva Conference leads to war. By misleading the electorate in this manner, the Alignment, as the former Minister of Finance has admitted, won the 4–6 extra seats which made it, rather than Likud, eligible according to parliamentary custom to be called on to form a Cabinet.

This Government has no moral mandate for running the country. Who does not remember the 'beehive': Dayan, Sapir and Golda. That difference of six seats was given to a previous leadership. Therefore, in the name of democracy we say: Let us go to the people and let them decide what policy and what leadership they want. Elections can be held this Spring, before the pressures and threats start to become cumulative.

If new elections are held, we shall propose that Likud address itself to the electorate with a double appeal: for *change and unity*. Change —in the sense of replacing the Alignment by Likud as the group to be empowered to form the Cabinet, according to all the rules of democracy. A test of democracy, a true test, occurs when the cabinet is changed—there must be a peaceful, quiet handover of power.

Unity—for we believe that in these times, the nation needs a

National Unity Government. We have offered a helping hand to establish such a government but the hand remained hanging in the air. That is why we say that, if the people give us a mandate, we shall propose to all Zionist parties the formation of a National Unity Government.

Some people like to call us all kinds of names. But who is dogmatic? Those who believed that there must be a Jewish State in our lifetime? —and there is; a Jewish army—and there is; 'illegal' immigration? —and there was; Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel—and it has been so proclaimed; the whole of Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel—and it has been made whole. Those who said: go down to the Jordan?—and today everyone says that the Jordan is where we must make our stand? Who is dogmatic? Those who said all these things and have now been proved right by the facts of life? Or those who say: let us give up Judea and Samaria for the sake of peace, while the enemy says: even if you withdraw to the lines of June, 1967, you will not have peace, even if you surrender all of East Jerusalem, you will not have peace; even if you surrender the Golan Heights, you will not have peace; even if you withdraw to the lines of November, 1947, you will continue to live under a question mark, unless you agree to disappear in Arafat's "secular, democratic State"?

When the enemy says all this, and people say: Let us announce concessions and promise that we will withdraw without peace—surely that is being dogmatic and out of touch with the realities of life.

Another name people call us is "extremist." Jews, Zionists, what has happened to us? If a Jew says that Eretz Yisrael belongs to the Jewish people by right, not only to the Jews who live in Eretz Yisrael, but to all sons of the Jewish people—is that extremism? Is that not what Herzl said, and Nordau, and Jabotinsky, and Ben-Gurion, and and Ussishkin? When our fathers prayed for rain, where did they pray that it should fall? Not in the countries where they lived, but here, in this country, in Eretz Yisrael. A man who loves his homeland, who says it is his country, his ancestral heritage, and who wants it to be the heritage of his children—is he an extremist? I call that being moderate.

But there are extremists in Israel, and they compete among them-

selves to be the one who wants to make the greatest concessions. One is prepared to give up the whole of the Sinai peninsula, and the next to throw in "six lousy kilometres" on the Golan Heights. The next one is prepared to add Judea, and Samaria as well, and the Old City of Jerusalem, or to talk about international arrangements for all of Jerusalem, or to negotiate with Arafat's messengers. Those are the extremists: extremists in making concessions, extremists in the surrender of the mind, in the willingness to surrender that leads, God forbid, to Munich.

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6. Foreign policy section of a speech made at the 13th Convention of the Herut Movement. Jerusalem, 6 January 1977

Translated from the Hebrew text, Maariv *(Tel-Aviv), 7 January 1977, p. 21.*

The Likud is seeking the confidence of the voters, so that it may become the leading parliamentary party and form the next government. Until the government crisis we were saying that the Labour Alignment must be moved to the opposition seats. Since that time the country has been living in the nightmare of a minority government, which lacks the confidence of the Knesset. The Alignment is, in fact, ruling against the opposition of the Knesset majority in which the Likud is the primary factor. So from now on, we say that the Alignment must remain in the opposition seats with limited representation. Thus, after the elections in May, it will be possible to form a government in which the Likud is the dominant element, and which will enjoy the confidence of the Knesset.

If the Likud is called upon to form the government, its primary concern will be to prevent war. Fully aware of the gravity and authenticity of our words—this has been experienced by other nations—I am expressing now my full confidence that we shall deter aggression, prevent war, preserve the security of the nation and move it towards peace. We shall always be concerned with increasing the strength of the Israeli army. We shall work for a permanent transition to a state where we ourselves produce the basic means of defence and deterrence. Israel has outstanding scientists and an excellent labour force, so it is always possible, thanks to them, to achieve this goal.

The Likud government will take initiatives towards peace. We shall do this not through the UN General Assembly, where the majority is hostile to us, but rather we shall look for a friendly country which has normal diplomatic relations with Israel and its neighbours; we shall transmit our suggestions to them to start negotiations towards signing a peace treaty. These negotiations must be direct, with no

previous conditions, and free from any foreign formulas for a solution. "With no previous conditions" means that just as we do not ask the Arabs to accept our suggestions before starting negotiations, they also will not ask us to accept their suggestions before attending a peace conference. This will meet alternately in the capitals of our states, or in a neutral place such as Geneva. "Free from any foreign formulas for a solution" is an item in the platform of the US Democratic Party on the Middle East, which was approved by the president-elect, Carter (except for the relocation of the US Embassy in Jerusalem). This is a sound political stand which we adopt with no reservations. The negotiating table must be clean. The partners must be committed to refrain from any hostile acts by means of regular armies or non-regular forces.

Special attention must be given to the relations between Israel and the United States. These relations should be established on a mutual basis, in the conscience of the two peoples. Till now, there has been an impression prevailing in America that there is one-sidedness in providing aid to Israel. From my experience I can say that only a few people in America know what we did for her during the seven years of war in Vietnam, when we were standing on the east bank of the closed Suez Canal. The truth is that by forcing the Soviet arms shipment to sail around the Cape of Good Hope, we delayed the supply of weapons to the enemies of the US and saved thousands of American soldiers from being killed or wounded. Leftist snobbism has prevented, till now, certain circles from revealing these and other facts to American public opinion. We shall reveal these facts, and our relations will be established on mutual recognition—which is the real basis for foreign relations. We will encourage the initiative of Israeli citizens and friends of the US, and the initiative of American citizens and friends of Israel, to establish public committees in both countries to serve US-Israeli common interests.

These common interests stand on the background of a claim to establish a so-called Palestinian state in Judaea and Samaria. Such a state would be a continuous threat to the Jewish state and also a serious threat to the free world as a whole, because it will inevitably turn into a central Soviet base in the Middle East. We shall dedicate

our full attention to explaining this common interest.

We shall express our readiness to normalize the relations between Israel and the Soviet Union, should the USSR, which severed its diplomatic relations with Israel nine years ago, suggest their renewal. We shall inform her of our readiness for that, but we clearly demand that the Soviet government stop the persecution of Jews and Zionists, set Russian Jewry free, and make it possible for any of them to emigrate to Eretz Israel, if he so wishes.

We shall act to repair relations between Israel and France and renew our friendship with her. I am convinced that our numerous friends in France will work towards this good objective, also on a mutual basis. The coming period will be suitable for this joint action in both countries.

We shall also contribute, as far as possible, to the establishment of peace and mutual understanding among nations.

Our national policy will be based, in accordance with right, justice and law, on the following principles:

1. Judaea and Samaria are integral parts of Israeli sovereignty. It should be known that anyone ready to surrender Judaea and Samaria to foreign rule will inevitably be founding the basis for a Palestinian state.

2. The borders between Egypt and Israel shall be fixed in Sinai. The whole of Sinai is no more in our hands, and there is no party in Israel, except for the communists, which is ready to abandon all of Sinai. There is nothing more to add to our basic provision concerning a peace treaty. It has been established that no line drawn by the government leads to an agreement, but rather to pressures for further shifting to Israel's disadvantage.

3. The borders between Syria and Israel shall be fixed on the Golan Heights based on the political evaluations already made.

4. Relations between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority in Eretz Israel shall be founded on propriety, mutual respect, equal rights of citizens and inhabitants, and socio-economic progress.

5. Members of the Arab nation, which we recognize, shall be given a free choice to acquire Israeli citizenship or to keep their previous one. If they choose to become Israeli citizens, they will

enjoy all rights, including voting for the Knesset, on equal footing with Jewish citizens. If they do not choose our citizenship, they will enjoy all rights, except voting for the Knesset, on equal footing with Jewish citizens. The Arabs in Eretz Israel shall be assured of autonomous education. The refugee problem shall be solved on a humane basis, through human understanding, by providing them with work and housing.

This programme is called, misleadingly, "chauvinism". I want to ask every intellectual what kind of chauvinism is there, if we are proposing a life in common with members of another nation, in peace, propriety, equal rights and mutual respect? We are facing a complete distortion of concepts and facts. We are not "chauvinists", we are nationalists.

7. Interview given at the illegal Qaddoum settlement in the occupied West Bank. 19 May 1977

Translated from the French transcript, L'Express *(Paris), 23–29 May, 1977, p. 55.*

Q. After your participation in today's ceremony at Qaddoum, will there soon be other settlements in the West Bank?

A. The term the West Bank means nothing. It is Judaea-Samaria. It is Israeli land belonging to the Jewish people. It is no longer necessary to establish colonies, since the future government of Israel will ask the Jewish people to establish themselves on their own land. It is a paradox that the Jews can settle in Tel Aviv, London or Paris and are forbidden to settle in Judaea or Samaria.

Q. Does this mean the annexation of the West Bank?

A. One can only annex foreign lands. This is liberated land. I do not see any reason preventing the coexistence of a Jewish community and an Arab community on this land.

Q. Will Israeli law be applied in the West Bank?

A. I repeat that it is a question of Judaea-Samaria. It is a question that will be brought before the Knesset and resolved by it.

Q. Will you give Israeli citizenship to the Arabs of this area?

A. We shall give an option to the Arabs of Israel. They could become Israelis completely or keep their present citizenship.

Q. Does your policy risk provoking tension with the United States?

A. Not at all. President Jimmy Carter has already announced that he will invite the leader of the next Israeli government to Washington. The new American ambassador to our country announced on his arrival in Tel Aviv that the United States would accept in good faith the democratic choice of the Israeli electorate. A community of interests exists between Israel and the United States. I hope that things will be clearer after my meeting with President Carter.

Q. And your relations with France?

A. We have many friends in France and we have already received numerous congratulatory telegrammes from our French friends.

Q. When will you form your government?

A. The president of the state will summon me within twenty-one days to form the new government. I think I will succeed long before then.

8. Speech to the Knesset presenting the Likud government and its policy. Jerusalem, 20 June 1977

English translation by Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

Sir, President of the State, Mr. Chairman, my colleagues the Knesset members. In a democratic decision of which we are proud, the people of Israel decided on 17 May on a change of guard in the administration. A party that had for a long time formed the leadership in the Zionist Federation and the governments in the State of Israel has become the second party in the Knesset, while a political bloc that had served the country patiently and loyally according to the rules of democracy and parliamentarian opposition has become the first party and was called upon to form a new government.

On Tuesday, 7 June 1977, the President of the State was kind enough, by virtue of his authority and upon the recommendation of Knesset factions representing a decisive majority of members of the house, to entrust me with the task of forming the government. Today I have come to present the government, with its composition and distribution of functions within it, to the Knesset and to request the house of representatives to give it its confidence.

The electorate has given us its confidence. But we shall not pride ourselves in victory. We know that the chief tests lie ahead of us, and since the government is new and so is its policy, I am asking this house and the nation to grant it moral credit, at least for the first year of its office. Not in one day will we correct wrongs and advance the state in the social, economic and political spheres. Our desire to do so is strong. We will do our utmost, through hard labor, to implement the positive programs for the execution of which we received the confidence of the people. Yet, this takes time. I hope that the moral credit will be given us and that we will be able, in conditions of national consensus, to work for the welfare of the people in all walks of life.

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues the Knesset members, upon

assuming his high position, the President of the United States, Mr. Carter, quoted from the Prophet Micah, as follows: "It hath told thee, O Man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." These words have served in the past just as today as a guide for us. But Micah had also visualized the end of days. This vision is similar, with certain distinctions, to Isaiah's vision. Every person who seeks peace and justice is even today stirred when he reads those immortal words: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In the light of this vision, we too shall proceed, out of the faith and knowledge that this is one of the most prodigious contributions of Jewish perception to human civilization, and that the day will come when wars between people shall cease and lethal weapons shall be no more, and peace shall reign on earth. And this, too, shall we remember: After the transcendence of the universal vision, Micah the Morashtite asserts: "For let all the peoples walk each one in the name of its God: But we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever."

By virtue of this age-long heritage, I wish to declare that the Government of Israel will not ask any nation, be it near or far, mighty or small, to recognize our right to exist. The right to exist? It would not enter the mind of any Briton or Frenchman, Belgian or Dutchman, Hungarian or Bulgarian, Russian or American, to request for his people recognition of its right to exist. Their existence *per se* is their right to exist. The same holds true for Israel. We were granted our right to exist by the God of our fathers, at the glimmer of the dawn of human civilization nearly 4,000 years ago. For that right, which has been sanctified in Jewish blood from generation to generation, we have paid a price unexampled in the annals of the nations. Certainly, this fact does not diminish or enfeeble our right. On the contrary. Therefore, I re-emphasize that we do not expect anyone to request, on our behalf, that our right to exist in the land of our

fathers be recognized. It is a different recognition which is required between ourselves and our neighbours: recognition of sovereignty and of the mutual need for a life of peace and understanding. It is this mutual recognition that we look forward to: for it we shall make every possible effort.

Eretz Yisra'el, the beloved place of our fathers, our only country—we have cleaved to it throughout the ages, we have never severed ties with it. We have prayed for it, yearned for it, loved it with all our heart and soul. We did not forget it for a single day in our wandering in the Diaspora. Our Holy Fathers carried its name on their lips when they were dragged by ruthless, destructive foes to all the wanton deaths. We were exiled from it and returned to it with faith, right and sacrifice, with celebrated pioneering construction and a magnificent war of independence, of self-liberation. No man gave us our liberty. We conquered it with what was left of our national strength, in the era when a third of our people was exterminated and no one came to their rescue.

Over 70 years ago, Ze'ev Jabotinsky wrote of this land: "Our brethren, the true seed of our national unity is the pure fruit of Eretz Yisra'el. Before coming to Eretz Yisra'el we were not a nation and we had no existence. On the soil of Eretz Yisra'el the Hebrew people has been created from the fragments of various peoples. We have grown up on the soil of Eretz Yisra'el, on it we have become citizens. Fortifying the faith in one God, we have inhaled the spirit of the land, and in our struggle for independence and rule we have been pervaded by its atmosphere. Our body has been nourished by the grain growing from its soil. The ideas of our prophets developed in Eretz Yisra'el, and in it the Song of Solomon was first uttered. All that is Hebrew within us has been bestowed upon us by Eretz Yisra'el. Everything else that is within us is not Hebrew. The people of Israel and Eretz Yisra'el are one."

And indeed, as we have written in the basic guidelines of the government policy: the Jewish people has an eternal, historic right to Eretz Yisra'el, the inheritance of our fathers, a right that

is not to be disputed and undermined.

My teachers and superiors, the Knesset members, we will try to deepen the friendship between us and the United States. This will be the firm foundation of the government policy. America and Israel have in common not only profound feelings for and faith in the values of morality and democracy. We believe they are united also by a true and profound partnership of interests. Israel is an integral part of the free world. But the free—the democratic—world has of late greatly shrunk. It may be likened to an island whose shores are swept by stormy waves and tempestuous seas of turbid totalitarianism. A famous 19th century slogan must be altered in our day: Free men of all countries, unite, we must all stand together to repulse the threat and preserve the freedom of man.

We shall work for renewal of the friendship between Israel and France. There existed more than friendship: there was an alliance between our two countries. I hereby call on the president of France and its government to resume those relations with Israel. Of course, Israel has excellent friends in France. From the two ends of the Mediterranean we shall stretch out a hand to one another and work for the revival of the friendship between the two peoples.

We are interested in normalization of relations between Israel and the Soviet Union. Three periods can be noted in relations between the Zionism in Eretz Yisra'el and the Soviet Union. Starting with the Bolshevik Revolution, for nearly 30 years, the relations were of unbridgeable hostility initiated by Moscow. In the late forties came the great turning point. Under the influence of the war of liberation against British rule, Moscow began to view the aspiration for the renaissance of the State of Israel as one of human progress. We all recall the speeches by Messrs. Gromyko and Tsarapkin, about the urgent need for establishing the Jewish state. And then the 'fifties,' in which there came a turn for the worse, Moscow lending a hand to our enemies and equipping them with lethal weapons—knowing well that one day these would be directed against the remnants of the

Jewish people, whose destruction its rulers had seen with their own eyes on the soil of their country and elsewhere.

Upon the outbreak of the Six-Day War, the Soviet Union severed diplomatic relations with Israel. Resumption of these normal relations depends, in the nature of things, on Moscow's initiative. Should such initiative be forthcoming, we shall demand that an end be put to persecution of Judaism and of Zionism, to the incitement against them, that all Prisoners of Zion be released and every Jew throughout the Soviet Union so desiring be allowed to immigrate, to return to Eretz Yisra'el—or, in the words of our brethren, the seekers of Zion in the Soviet Union, to the "Jewish People's Historic Homeland."

Mr. Chairman, our prime concern is prevention of a new war in the Middle East. I call upon King Husayn, President as-Sadat and President al-Asad to meet with me—whether in our capitals or on neutral soil, in public or away from the spotlights of publicity—in order to discuss the establishment of true peace between their countries and Israel. Much blood, too much, has been shed in the region—Jewish and Arab. Let us put an end to the bloodshed that is abhorrent to us, and sit down to the negotiating table in sincerity and seriousness. Should this plea encounter refusal, we shall make a note of the Arab intransigence. It will not be new. Five prime ministers who preceded me—David Ben Gurion, Moshe Sharet and Levy Eshkol of blessed memory, and Mrs. Golda Meir and Yitzhaq Rabin, to whom I wish long life—repeatedly called for holding such meetings. And there was no response—or, rather, there was a negative response—from the other side. But we shall not weary of sounding the call—not for propaganda purposes, but for the vital needs of our peoples and our countries.

And now, Members of the Knesset, the appeal to ourselves, to our people. I call on all citizens of Israel who have left the country to return home. In days past, Jew-haters were wont to say that the Jew pursues the following rule: *ubi bene, ibi patria,* wherever I feel good, there my homeland be. We shall take no account of them. We shall prove to ourselves that with the revival of

independence, the Jew pursues an opposite rule: *ubi patria, ibi bene,* where my homeland be, there be it good for me—even though it be difficult for me. The government will act to ease matters for the returning families. We shall not address these people by derogatory terms: Insults solve no problem. We shall say to them simply: The time has come to return home.

We call on the young generation, in the homeland and in the Diaspora, to arise, go forth and settle. Come from east and west, north and south, to build together Eretz Yisra'el. There is room in it for millions of returnees to Zion. We do not wish to evict, nor shall we evict any Arab resident from his land. Jews and Arabs, Druze and Circassians, can live together in this land, and they must live together in peace, mutual respect, equal rights, in freedom and with social and economic progress.

Members of the Knesset, the government's plans for legislation for this short session and the Knesset's winter session will include, among other things, a national health insurance plan for all, national and judicial arbitration for services essential to the public and to the country, a minimum wage law, a pension law according to the prayer that is holy to Israel—do not reject us when we are old, do not abandon us when we have no more strength. A law of entitlement to housing; also, if necessary, we will submit bills aimed at uprooting violent crime; we all have to make an effort to return to the sublime tradition of the Jewish people in the Diaspora and in Eretz Yisra'el. For generations, the Jewish people did not know certain types of crime—against another man or woman, or against themselves. We have to build a beautiful Eretz Yisra'el, but we also have to ensure that we have a beautiful people of Israel, honest, pure, that acts honorably in interpersonal relations, that maintains civil law and order and that serves as an example to its neighbor. There are quite many citizens who have committed economic crimes, whether because of certain draconic laws or other reasons. The government will consider the possibility of forgetting the past, of turning over a new leaf in this sphere. We are looking at the future, the country will honor the citizen and the citizen

will honor the country's laws. We will all educate the younger generation on human and Jewish values which Israel's soul has followed from generation to generation. That is to say: love of man, love of freedom and justice, love of the motherland. We have a wonderful younger generation, it is serious, devoted and loyal. When faced with tests it has stood up to all of them with honor and devotion. It has all our love and devotion and we hope that when the time comes, with God's help, we will give the younger generation a land and country which all our people and all peoples can be proud of.

Mr. Chairman, in regard to the structure of the government, we intend to carry out renovations for the sake of economy and efficiency. We will abolish ministries and unite ministries. For example, we will abolish the Police Ministry which does not exist in any democratic state and we will transfer its spheres of activity to the Ministry of the Interior. We will unite the Tourism Ministry with the Commerce and Industry Ministry and we will have one ministry for matters of industry, commerce and tourism; we will set up a new ministry to be called the Ministry for [social] Betterment which will encompass the spheres of activity of the Welfare Ministry, the Labor Ministry and also the National Insurance Institute. For the near future we will maintain the existence of the Health Ministry. However, if there is a change in the composition of the government and the unification of this ministry with the Betterment Ministry is required, we will consider the possibility favorably. The Minister of Housing, who is from now on to be called the Minister of Construction, will be responsible for spheres of activity that are now dealt with by the Labor Ministry and are connected with construction. We will unite the Transport Ministry with the Communications Ministry and we will have one Ministry for Transport and Communications. We will establish a new Ministry for Energy and Infrastructure whose spheres of activity will include, among other things, issues connected with energy today being dealt with by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the issue of infrastructure which are today

dealt with by other ministries, such as the Energy Commission, the electricity company, the fuel authority, the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Council for Research and Development.

I have mentioned a few examples of the changes that we intend to make in the structure of the government and its ministries and the government will speedily bring its decisions and the implementation of the changes in the structure of the government and its ministries to the Knesset for its approval as required by law.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have the honor of presenting the composition of the government to the Knesset as follows: Menahem Begin, Prime Minister; Simha Ehrlich, Finance Minister; Aharon Abu-Hazera, Religious Affairs Minister; Yosef Burg, Interior Minister and Police Minister; Moshe Dayan, Foreign Minister; Yigal Horovitz, Commerce and Industry Minister and Tourism Minister; Zevulun Hammer, Education and Culture Minister; Ezer Weizman, Defense Minister; David Levy, Immigrant Absorption Minister; Yizhaq Moda'i, Energy and Infrastructure Minister; Gideon Patt, Construction Minister; Eliezer Shostaq, Health Minister; Ariel Sharon, Agriculture Minister.

As you can see, honorable members of the Knesset, I have not mentioned in the list of ministers those responsible for the Ministries of Justice, Welfare and Labor which will be incorporated into the new Betterment Ministry when it is established, nor for the Transport and Communications Ministries which, as has been said, will be united into one ministry. The duties of these ministries will for the time being be carried out by the Prime Minister. We have done this in order to leave open a possibility of the Democratic Movement for Change joining the government. Because of the importance of these ministries and for the sake of the government's efficiency we will be unable to leave this situation be for more than 4 or 5 weeks. We would like to hope that until then the negotiations between the spokesmen of the government and the representatives of the DMC will be renewed and that it will join the government, and its representatives will

take over these ministries.

And now for the basic lines of the government's policy the presentation of which is required by law.

A) Recognition of the unity of fate and partnership in the struggle for the existence of the Jewish people in Eretz Yisra'el and in the Diaspora.

B) The Jewish people has an historic eternal right to Eretz Yisra'el, the inheritance of our forefathers—a right that is inalienable.

C) The government will plan and establish and encourage settlements, both rural and urban on the land of the homeland.

D) The government will regard the encouragement of immigration as the first of the Nation's duties.

E) The government will regard the aspiration for peace as the first of its concerns and will actively and consistently strive for a permanent peace in the region.

F) The government will invite Israel's neighbors, each and every one of them, directly or by means of a friendly country, to conduct direct negotiations for the signing of a peace contract between them, without prior conditions from either side and without a formula for a solution being invented externally. Each party will be free according to its consideration to raise any proposal and every issue will be negotiable.

G) The government announces its willingness to participate in the Geneva conference when it is convened by the United States and the Soviet Union on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338.

H) Toward the Geneva conference and direct negotiations the government announces Israel's willingness to conduct these negotiations in order to achieve a real peace both contractual and practical, that will bring about a normalization of life in the region.

I) As long as there is no peace contract the parties will be bound by the agreements signed between them by the previous governments.

J) The Knesset has by law authorised the government to

impose by order the state's law, jurisdiction and administration over all the territory of Eretz Yisra'el as determined in the order. This legal and parliamentary authority is the government's consideration. It will not be activated as long as negotiations for a peace contract between Israel and its neighbors are being conducted. This will be subject to choosing the suitable time, to the government's political considerations, to a special Knesset debate and its approval.

K) Equal rights for all citizens and residents irrespective of religion, race, nationality, sex and ethnic origin.

L) The government will insure the freedom and liberties of the individual, the encouragement of free enterprise and the equality of possibilities for the advancement and betterment of the individual.

M) A constant struggle for the return to Zion of all who wish to from the Soviet Union and for the salvation of Jewry from Syria and other Arab countries.

N) Curbing inflation, stabilizing the currency, insuring a fair standard of living for every resident of the country.

O) Activity aimed at alleviating poverty and at granting aid to large families specifically in regard to housing and education.

P) A constant effort to increase capital investment from abroad, to renew economic growth, and a special effort will be made in the direction of rental housing.

Q) The government will be diligent in insuring employment and advancing the joy of creation and the labor ethic.

R) The government will encourage and provide incentives for increasing productivity in a combined effort toward the speedy growth of the gross national product and the constant increase in export.

S) The government will act toward improving labor relations and reducing disputes in the economy, among other things, by legislating obligatory arbitration in the essential services.

T) The government will act toward encouraging and broadening agriculture and settlement of all types.

U) Measures will be taken to curb emigration, to bring

citizens who have left the country back to the homeland and to increase immigration both from east and west.

V) Respect for the law and the uprooting of crime and violence.

W) The introduction of a long school day and the founding of education on the values of Judaism and Zionism, on the love of Israel and the homeland.

X) The government will insure freedom of conscience and religion for all citizens. It will provide the public requirements for religion through the state. It will insure religious education for all children whose parents wish it.

Y) The *status quo* in regard to religion will be maintained.

Z) The government will honor the international agreements that have been signed by previous governments.

Mr. Chairman, I have presented the government and I have submitted the basic lines of its policy to the Knesset for its approval as required by law. Now I have the honor of asking the Knesset to give a vote of confidence in the government.

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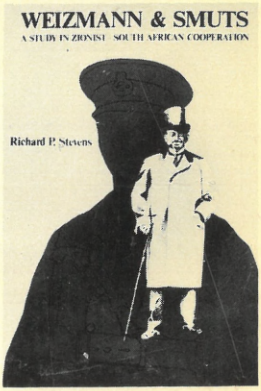

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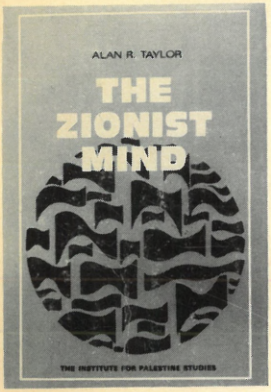

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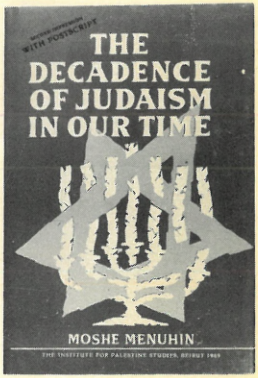

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